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City of Barrie

Final

International Relations Committee

Tuesday, February 6, 2024 | **6:00 PM** | **Sir Robert Barrie Room**

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT
For consideration by the Finance and Responsible Governance Committee on March 20, 2024.

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Councillor, J. Harris at 6:02 p.m. The following were in attendance for the meeting:

Present: 11 - Councillor J. Harris
M. Sachkiw - Co Chair and Arras
Deputy Mayor R. Thomson
LCol G. Johnston - Base Borden
J. Babcock - Global Perspectives Program
C. Hassey
A. Jones
J. M. Pigeon - German Twinning
B. Sergeant - Harrogate
S. Scully-Pratt - Youth Ambassadors
K. Watson - Georgian College

Absent: 4 - T. Gardiner - Japan Twinning
W. Hay
J. Massie
L. Palson - Georgian College

STAFF:
Business Development Officer, N. Gavarre
Director of Economic and Creative Economy, S. Schlichter
Legislative Coordinator, T. Maynard.

The International Relations Committee met and reports as follows:

SECTION "A"

FOLLOW UP TO PRESENTATION - COMMITTEES STRUCTURE

The Committee reviewed the International Relations Committee economic objectives as presented by staff in Economic and Creative Development Department at their meeting held on February 6, 2024. The Committee agreed to amend their Terms of Reference to reflect the new economic objectives and initiatives.

The Committee members reviewed and approved the draft correspondence for the City's sister cities/partnership about their new directions and initiatives including a fourth objective concerning education and workforce development.

That the International Relations Committee met and recommends adoption of the following recommendation(s):

SECTION "B"

AMENDMENT INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE 2022 TO 2026 TERMS OF REFERENCE

That the objectives of the 2022 to 2026 International Relations Committee Terms of Reference be deleted and replaced with the following:

1. **Trade Promotion** - Increase bilateral trade between sister cities.

   Actions:
   - Surface Barrie companies looking for export opportunities.
   - Connect companies with Invest Barrie to provide service for exporting.

   KPI's:
   - How many business interactions occur between Barrie businesses and sister cities.
   - Number of meetings set up between business and Invest Barrie or sister cities.

2. **Business Networking** - International Relations Committee to facilitate networking opportunities for local businesses.

Actions:

- Facilitate introductions for Barrie businesses to new businesses from sister cities. Introductions to promote connection and discovery.
- Foster investment opportunities by connecting local businesses, entrepreneurs, and investors with counterparts in sister cities to encourage cross-border investments.
- Foster partnerships in specific industries where both cities have strengths, encouraging collaborations, joint ventures, and knowledge exchange to drive innovation and competitiveness.

KPI's:

- How many businesses interactions occur between Barrie businesses and sister cities.
- Number of developed partnerships, joint ventures, or collaborations developed.

3. **Business Ambassadors** supporting Invest Barrie - International Relations Committee can promote Barrie in international networks.

Actions:

- Host delegations coming to Barrie to learn more about the city.
- Arrange for delegations to come to Barrie by actively seeking out opportunities with sister cities.

KPI's:

- Number of investment opportunities brought forward by the International Relations Committee.
- Number of delegations hosted, visiting the City of Barrie.

4. **Education and Workforce Development** - Create a well-educated, skilled, and adaptable workforce that can contribute to the economic growth, innovation, and sustainability for both regions.

Actions:

- Establish student exchange programs to enhance educational ties and develop a diverse and skilled workforce.
- Collaborate on vocational training programs and initiatives to address specific skill needs in both cities.
- Share best practices and implement initiatives in technology, innovation, and substantiality to spur economic growth, urban planning and development, and changemaking.
- Foster collaboration in research and development (R&D) and social innovation initiatives between universities, research institutions, and businesses in both cities.

KPI's:

- Number of participating students in exchange programs and hosting of global delegations.
- Percentage increase in specific 21st century skills identified as crucial for local industries.
- Adoption rate of best practices and initiatives in local businesses and industries.
- Number of collaborative R&D and social innovation projects initiated.

This matter was recommended (Section "B") to Finance and Responsible Governance Committee for consideration of adoption at its meeting to be held on 3/20/2024.

CORRESPONDENCE - INTERNATIONAL SISTER CITIES/PARTNERSHIP

That correspondence as approved by the International Relations Committee at their meeting of February 6, 2024 be sent to the City of Barrie's International Sister Cities/Partnerships to advise of the new objectives and initiatives of the Committee.

This matter was recommended (Section "B") to Finance and Responsible Governance Committee for consideration of adoption at its meeting to be held on 3/20/2024.

The International Relations Committee met and reports as follows:

SECTION "C"

FOLLOW UP MICHIGAN EXPLORATION - NEXT STEPS

Stephannie Schlichter, Director of Economic and Creative Economy provided an update concerning the Michigan Exploration. She advised that the initial correspondence has been sent to Saginaw, Michigan requesting to explore opportunities and to cultivate connections between the two cities.

Ms. Schlichter advised that staff in Economic and Creative Development Department plan to schedule a virtual meeting with representatives of Saginaw, Michigan in February, 2024. Councillor, J. Harris, Al Jones, Mark Sachkiw and Kelly Watson of Georgian College volunteered on behalf of the International Relations Committee to participate in the meeting with Saginaw, Michigan.

HARROGATE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT EXCHANGE

Nora Gavarre, Business Development Officer and Bill Sergeant provided an update concerning the Harrogate Business Improvement District Exchange.

Ms. Gavarre and Mr. Sergeant provided an overview of proposed Harrogate Business Improvement District (BID) International Work Exchange Grant 2024, and the grant programming running between 2024 and 2028. Ms. Gavarre advised that staff of the Downtown Barrie Business Improvement Associations (BIA) are in support of the proposal as this will provide great opportunities for Harrogate participants and host businesses in Barrie.

The Committee agreed to support the Harrogate Business Improvement District Exchange Grant Program in partnership with the Downtown Business Improvement Association (BIA) between 2024 and 2028, as required.

The International Relations Committee met and recommends adoption of the following recommendation(s):

SECTION "D"

HARROGATE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) - INTERNATIONAL WORK EXCHANGE GRANT (IWEG)

1. That the International Relations Committee in partnership with the Downtown Business Improvement Association (BIA) supports the Harrogate Business Improvement District (BID) International Work Grant exchange program between 2024 to 2028.

2. That the Business Improvement District in Harrogate England work with the Downtown Business Improvement Association (BIA) to advance the business exchange and learning program.

3. That the Downtown BIA be requested to develop the logistics of the program with the International Relations Committee supporting areas of the program identified by the BIA on a case-by-case basis.

This matter was recommended (Section "D") to Finance and Responsible Governance Committee for consideration of adoption at its meeting to be held on 3/20/2024.

The International Relations Committee met and reports as follows:

SECTION "E"

YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Shannon Scully-Pratt provided an update concerning the Youth Ambassador Program. She indicated that the 2023 Murayama Youth Delegation are still trying to determine a presentation date to present to local schools about their 2023 Japan trip.

Ms. Scully-Pratt advised that preparations are taking place to host a youth delegation from Murayama, Japan for two weeks during the summer of 2024.

Mark Sachkiw, Co-Chair advised that Japan has a new Counsel General, and that he plans to meet with them soon.

GERMAN DELEGATION FOLLOW UP

Jamie Babcock advised that Innisdale Secondary School has started the marketing campaign for 2025 Global Perspectives Program.

Mr. Babcock commented that he met with representatives of Georgian College to discuss a Global Perspectives Program development opportunity between students at Innisdale Secondary School and students from Denmark. He advised that a Mock United Nations Assembly between Niels Brock and Innisdale Secondary School is scheduled for April 25, 2024, at City Hall.

Stephannie Schlichter, Director of Economic and Creative Development commented on trade missions, relationship development and making connections with Zweibrucken, Germany and local businesses.

Jean Maurice Pigeon advised that he will contact his representatives in Zweibrucken, Germany and explore the types of businesses in Germany and report back at a future Committee meeting.

Bill Sergeant and Jean Maurice Pigeon discussed their trip to Zweibrucken, Germany. They both indicated that they met with Lord Marold Wositza in Germany who advised that Zweibrucken, Germany is still interested in continuing their relationship with the City of Barrie.

GEORGIAN COLLEGE AND HARROGATE COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP

Kelly Watson of Georgian College provided an update concerning Georgian College and Harrogate College Partnership.

Ms. Watson commented on the college's program, and funding of six students to travel to Harrogate, United Kingdom in February, 2025 with the objective to build an academic connection

Ms. Watson indicated that she working on building a proposal for the college between Barrie and Harrogate, United Kingdom and will contact staff in Invest Barrie to discuss further.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

CHAIRMAN